

**LCA Public Comments  
May 27, 2003 – Houma  
Open Session**

Someone should get in touch with Mayor Nagin of New Orleans regarding coastal land loss and potential impacts.

**General Session**

1. (Mark Davis) no buildable projects included; how can/will the plan be modified for future science & engineering and changes outside the boundary, for example sediment & nutrients changed upriver

Response: Adaptive Management. For example, MR&T project based on general approach in 1928. Changed in '36, '48, '52, etc. Likewise, the general plan may change.

2. (Tom Barnett) Davis Pond – adding silt – how long to add 1” of ground in basin?

Response: Not designed for sediment – oyster production  
(Tom Barnett) Sediment channel will shoal

Response: look at water to land chart

3. (Edward LeBlanc) study for parish. Why don't we dredge bayous? Need water in Terrebonne. omprehensive study for marshes in parish, do not need band aids, dredge bayous to get water down there. Bayou Terrebonne is clogged. Atchafalaya River is building up. Nothing is coming into Terrebonne. All fresh lakes turning to salt, all geese and ducks gone; need freshwater in Terrebonne Bayou; make channel into Terrebonne Bayou Canal. Previous canal is filled in and is a street; wasting time; COE get in trouble and should get out

Response: Systematic across state Morganza to Gulf – look at structures. We now have encroachment on these bayous, which makes it difficult to increase flows. We are “replumbing” the system to get the freshwater in the most effective way we can.

4. (Lori LeBlanc) timeframe of the alternatives? How evaluated? Evaluate on “50 Years” life as done before – we need the land, we're losing the land, so solutions should not be how we've done before – Not status quo projects. We should not restrict ourselves to 50 years of effects – when need effects to go beyond that. Cost/Benefit of Environment but only Economic Impacts, not Economic benefits.

Response: 50 years is life of structures; economics will require major study; took shortcut – just look at impact.

6. (Mike Bourgeois) LA Landowners Association – Landowners meeting in July – get them information on the study

5. (Randy Moertel) In public outreach, since most of the coast is privately owned, especially large land owners. Have we tried to find landowners? How will you address?

Response: We will be meeting with them in July.

(Randy Moertel) How will you identify?

Response: Gov, DNR; Got a good start, features not fixed, can move

6. (Rex Burg) 1. We have a reputation for the best politicians money can buy – how are we going to change our image and show we are not corrupt? How do we convince the nation that money will be spent given the negative image of Louisiana?

Response: America's Wetland campaign illustrates our track record in terms of projects that have been built in accordance with public expectations.

(Rex Burg) Mitigation of economic impacts on rural areas; 3. Address that solution the plan; How long does it take to build 1 inch of golden brown LA marsh soil?

Response: We're putting projects in place

(Rex Burg) How will you compensate communities that are adversely affected?

Response: We can weigh economic impacts. National Economic Development Plan looks at impacts to overall nation impact. In some cases you mitigate sometimes you don't.

7. (Ed Landgraff) Can you explain what is CWPPRA? What is WRDA '04? When do we stop studying? And where will we be in 10 years if passed? Bayou Little Caillou and Bayou Terrebonne needs.

Response: Explains timeframe on small and large-scale

8. (Jim Erny) Terrebonne had some of the earliest projects, they were ready to go – are there any projects designed that could be done with local funds?

Response: Keep pressing for local funds; looking at regulatory

9. (Rudy Sparks) Glad for large water diversions. Will you look at Old River Control?

Response: Will look at surrogates; Analyzed increased sediment load; Integrate Atchafalaya Basin.

From Cindy Steyer at a subprovince discussion

\*\* There are many landowners who are interested and who do expend personal funds taking defensive action to protect their lands. The example he gave was construction of bulkheads and bankline stabilization. He was talking fairly large scale - hiring tugs, barges, draglines, etc. He mentioned that to save costs where possible, he and other landowners consolidate their work to one job when the work falls in common areas so they aren't paying for three times the tugs,

barges, etc. This helps them maximize their expended dollars so more are going toward actual construction and not overhead. If they could tie their money and work to projects where possible, this would help further leverage all funds.

This shows many landowners are willing to commit funds to restoration and protection efforts. Can there be a mechanism set up to facilitate cooperation and fund sharing with landowner projects?

Unfortunately I did not get this gentleman's name, but he owns property in Waterproof, LA near Minor's Canal in Terrebonne Parish.

Other comments brought up:

- add salinity control along east bank of Freshwater Bayou Canal
- strengthen Mermentau Basin project to protect fresh marshes
- CWPPRA projects fall through the cracks because of funding shortages
- strengthen west bank of Freshwater Bayou Canal by rebuilding spoil bank
- shoreline protection at Long Beach in Cameron Parish

## **BREAKOUT SESSION: SUBPROVINCE 2**

- Kerry St. Pe, BTNEP - Does public understand what are we after? Can not afford to fail. BTNEP management group study determined wanted biological diversity, minimized salinity changes, habitat gains. Can you use sediment enriched diversions with less water? Prefer pulsing to reintroductions. We need more science. Limited restoration without ridges – maintain ridges by directing sediment.
- Mark Davis, CRCL – Can not afford to reach for a lofty goal. Values: 1. work with natural processes – like pulsing; use natural processes less political and also natural maintenance, since we can't afford cost of maintenance 2. should not be funding limited 3. facilitate natural hydrology – ridge system, preparing landscape for it; marsh creation/ridge creation; remove hydrological barriers; Objectives: long term functional survival of coastal zone as a whole, displacement is already ongoing; Tradeoffs: whatever they need to be. How fairly we pursue them.
- Bob Jones, Terrebonne Parish – temporal problems with natural processes, we can't wait that long, don't have that kind of time
- Kerry St. Pe – What is sediment enriched diversion? Does it use pipeline slurry?; Are we trying to reach a particular image in history?
- Bob Jones – Since in Subprovince 3 can't get it there to enhance
- Group – not comfortable with marsh acreage now with storm surge
- Mark Davis – What can river deliver? What landscape? How much river can we use?

- Unknown – Looking at land loss rates in Subprovince 2 & 3 Did you consider the time it takes to implement? Will we look at area losing most land as implement/select projects? What if area becomes uninsurable? Tradeoffs should be in 1 & 4
- Lori Leblanc, ROR- What's wrong with prioritizing as in medicine? Heart attack higher priority than cut finger
- Randy Moertle – Best offense is to protect: ER – if one person has lost an arm, leg and an ear, do you want the others to become as bad off as them before you treat them? Greatest area of need is here in Barataria/Terrebonne (subprovince 3) – so select most sustainable projects in this area and give other areas lower costs sustainable projects
- Kerry St. Pe – Not advocating even distribution between subprovinces; apply funds according to need & sustainability & don't disregard needs of other subprovinces
- Bob Jones – consider wetlands as treatment areas of discharge; flood protection won't allow major diversions (Third Delta)
- Alexis Duvall – If get authorization of LCA, but not Morganza to Gulf, can features be incorporated into LCA? What if HNC lock didn't occur?
- Lori Leblanc – Are certain components of LCA part of Morganza to Gulf?; How are you going to decide to do reduce, maintain, or enhance?
- Ed, Shell – HNC Lock is vital to Subprovince 3. How long will it be before HNC lock in place? Should not deepen and dredge HNC before building lock.
- Bob Jones – Is impact on fisheries to cause them to move offshore or total reduction?
- Use term effects if talking positive or negative not impacts which people assume is negative

Ed L. w/Shell – Oil & Gas aspects: more exposed every day – Companies question should we sell assets (well heads, lines, etc) or will something be done in one or two years? How long will it be until we get relief? Will companies have to abandon these assets? Bring to LAMOGA.

Randy Moertle – LIOGA & Mid Continent have lobbyists

## **Group 2**

Questions asked:

1. How do you show land building?
  - Tim Axtman, Project Manager, explained the answer to this.
2. Do you have graphs with acreage growth?

3. Are Barrier Islands included in all areas?
4. What about imbalance of projects in different provinces?
5. Timelines?
6. Public Involvement with local governments?
7. Asked about consideration of booster pumps?
8. Consultant interested in spreadsheets of dredging information.

## **BREAKOUT SESSION: SUBPROVINCE 3 & 4**

### Comments:

- Speed up permitting process for privately funded restoration measures
- Be concerned with adverse impacts to rural coastal communities that depend on harvest of fish and wildlife species.
- The Old River Control Structure, the interior Atchafalaya basin, and the Coastal Atchafalaya basin operation and restoration measures should be coordinated before any plans are designed.
- Separate the two water sources, Bayou Lafouche and Atchafalaya to obtain no net loss.
- Most attendees favor land-building projects over oyster lease issues.
- Restore barrier islands as buffers not hurricane barriers.
- Address land loss issues first.
- Incorporate navigation industry's needs in coastal wetland restoration plans so that use of existing navigation waterways such as the GIWW and Mississippi River is not impaired.
- (Randy Moertle) Freshwater Bayou is the boundary between these two subprovs & there are no measures to address it in any of the alternatives for either of the two. The problem with Freshwater Bayou is that it has widened in some places to 800 feet and the spoilbanks are gone in many sections. Fresh and intermediate areas, particularly around White Lake and other areas where hydrologic control is attempted, are vulnerable to saltwater intrusion coming up the Bayou. There are two main waterways that connect the Bayou with the White Lake area to the west, which have structures on them. But the problem there is that they are circumvented through breaches in the Bayou spoilbank. There are other large areas, including the CWPPRA project, where hydrologic protection is undermined due to loss of spoilbank that facilitates increased water exchange between the Bayou and fragile organic marshes. Mr. Moertle suggests reestablishing the spoilbanks from the gulf up to about the Vermilion River Cutoff with a substantially rock-lined earthen embankment. There are sections of the Bayou that have been addressed thru CWPPRA already. The west side should be addressed first, if prioritization is necessary.

- (Rudy Sparks) The Upper Atchafalaya Basin, between Old River Control Structure and Avoca Island, should not have been left out of the LCA project area. The cypress/bottomland forests are very stressed and dying from elevated water levels due to the policy of diverting 30% of Mississippi River flow through that basin. The ORCS should be operated to divert less of Miss. River flow. The Third Delta and Bayou Lafourche measures should be implemented to get flow to the needed areas in southern Terrebonne and Barataria Basins. The Atchafalaya Basin is not large enough to handle the volume of flows from the ORCS, so every year the growth is diminished as trees die and are not replaced with germination and new growth.
- (Melanie Boudreaux) Inquiring why blue crabs were not included in the species being modeled. Suggests that from a public perspective, people equate Louisiana with shrimp, crawfish, oysters and crabs, and that omitting crabs may cause us to lose the opportunity for those concerned with crabs to relate to this effort and its benefits. Heard about this meeting at the last minute from an "afterthought" e-mail from someone else, and asked why we aren't doing outreach to the general public who have no knowledge, experience or even any current interest in the coast or LCA. Suggests that the best way to reach people is to put out frequent television and radio commercials now that relay the concepts of the huge problem and what the LCA is about. Particularly that teenage and young adult audiences are critical and should be targeted. If the people in LA don't know about it, how will we get their support, and if we don't have it, how will we get the rest of the nation to support this. What we are waiting for?
- There are many landowners who are interested and who do expend personal funds taking defensive action to protect their lands. The example he gave was construction of bulkheads and bankline stabilization. He was talking fairly large scale - hiring tugs, barges, draglines, etc. He mentioned that to save costs where possible, he and other landowners consolidate their work to one job when the work falls in common areas so they aren't paying for three times the tugs, barges, etc. This helps them maximize their expended dollars so more are going toward actual construction and not overhead. If they could tie their money and work to projects where possible, this would help further leverage all funds. This shows many landowners are willing to commit funds to restoration and protection efforts. Can there be a mechanism set up to facilitate cooperation and fund sharing with landowner projects?
- Adam Bualliot- Terrebonne Parish or state should maintain projects that we have already so such drastic steps don't have to be taken.
- Plant woody species on barrier islands.
- Need to study Atchafalaya water budget to determine optimal water allocation. Currently, managing Old River Control Structure as a status situation. Have to revisit 30/70 split.